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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SAM-01 PM-07 NSC-07 SS-20 SAJ-01

ACDA-19 H-03 DRC-01 /105 W
----- 033086

P R 101250Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1557

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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USIA FOR IOP/M

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: SOVIET MEDIA ON NEW PRESIDENT

REF: A. MOSCOW 12238; B. STATE 174699

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET MEDIA GIVE HEAVY COVERAGE TO
ACCESSION OF NEW PRESIDENT WITH EMPHASIS ON FACTUAL
REPORTING. SPARSE COMMENTARY EMPHASIZES NEW PRESIDENT'S
SUPPORT FOR DETENTE. END SUMMARY.

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2. IZVESTIYA AUGUST 9 DEVOTED ALMOST TWO FULL COLUMNS

ON FRONT PAGE TO CHANGE OF COMMAND IN WASHINGTON.
(SUCH FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE OF INTERNAL FOREIGN EVENTS
IS EXTREMELY RARE.) IZVESTIYA COLUMNS PROVIDED FULL
SUMMARIES OF NIXON RESIGNATION STATEMENT AND FORD
STATEMENT MADE AFTERWARDS PLUS TELEPHONED REPORT FROM
CORRESPONDENTS ARTAMONOV AND KOBYSH SUMMARIZING THE
EVENTS IN WASHINGTON OF AUGUST 8. INSIDE IZVESTIYA
PRINTS LONG COMMENTARY BY POLITICAL OBSERVER MATVEYEV
WHICH EMPHASIZES THAT IMPROVEMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL
POLITICAL CLIMATE AND TURN FROM DANGEROUS COLD WAR
PERIOD TO "NORMAL, SENSIBLE FORMS OF INTERNATIONAL
DISCOURSE" REPRESENT ACHIEVEMENT HAVING GREAT MARGIN
OF STABILITY AND NOT SUBJECT TO SITUATIONAL FLUCTUATION.
THERE IS NOW, ACCORDING TO MATVEYEV, AN IMPRESSIVE INTERNATIONAL
STRUCTURE OF AGREEMENTS AND LAWS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF PEAC-
EFUL COEXISTENCE. IN REVIEWING IMPROVED U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS,
MATVEYEV STRESSES THAT DETENT IS FUNDAMENTALLY IN
U.S. AS WELL AS SOVIET INTEREST AND ENJOYS WIDE BASE OF
SUPPORT IN U.S. WHICH IS NOT DEPENDENT ON ONE OR OTHER
PARTY OR ON VARIATIONS IN THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE INSIDE
THE COUNTRY. IN ARTICLE'S ONLY MENTION OF OUTGOING OR
INCOMING PRESIDENT BY NAME, MATVEYEV ASSURES READERS
THAT AS NIXON LEAVES OFFICE, "EXPLAINING THIS DEVELOPMENT
ON THE BASIS OF THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE
COUNTRY IN THE LAST DAYS, "U.S. LEADERS ANNOUNCE THAT
POLICIES OF DETENTE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS
WITH THE SOVIET UNION WILL BE CONTINUED AND PRESERVED.

3. PRAVDA AUGUST 10 FRONT PAGES THREE TASS
STORIES REPORTING FACTUALLY ON SWEARING-IN OF NEW PRESIDENT,
HIS FIRST SPEECH AS PRESIDENT, AND CONGRESSIONAL
RESOLUTIONS OF SUPPORT. SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF FORD
MENTIONS THAT HE HAS EXPRESSED SUPPORT OF NORMALIZATION
OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS AND APPROVED THE RESULTS OF
SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT MEETINGS. INSIDE STORIES ALSO
REPORT NIXON AND FORD SPEECHES OF AUGUST 8, WITH
SHORT COMMENTARY BY CORRESPONDENT STREL'NIKOV CITING AMERICAN
POLITICAL OBSERVERS AS UNDERLINING PRESIDENT
FORD'S INTENTION TO CONTINUE FOREIGN POLICY OF HIS
PREDECESSOR, ESPECIALLY RE USSR. STREL'NIKOV QUOTES
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FORD (FROM EARLIER INTERVIEW) AS STRESSING IMPORTANCE
AND VALUE OF MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON SUMMIT MEETINGS.

4. EVENING TV NEWS AUGUST 9 SHOWED FIVE MINUTES OF
EXCERPTS OF NIXON RESIGNATION SPEECH AND FORD TAKING
OATH OF OFFICE, PLAYING UP THEIR STATEMENTS RE POLICY
TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION.

5. COMMENT. EXTENT AND TONE OF SOVIET MEDIA COVERAGE
HAVE BEEN UNMISTAKABLY POSITIVE AND DESIGNED TO REASSURE
SOVIET PUBLIC THAT NIXON'S SUDDEN DEPARTURE IS NOT BLOW
TO IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. PRESIDENT FORD'S
STATEMENTS RE CONTINUING TO WORK FOR IMPROVED
RELATIONS WITH THE USSR HAVE CLEARLY HIT THEIR MARK.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PRESIDENT, DETENTE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW12293
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740219-1126
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740857/aaaabxfw.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. MOSCOW 12238; B. STATE 174699
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 APR 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <28 JUN 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET MEDIA ON NEW PRESIDENT
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, (NIXON, RICHARD M), (FORD, GERALD R)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005